

US32 HW: Read & annotate

The War for the American Mind

699

Berenson /
Talleu

world. Propaganda booklets with red-white-and-blue covers were printed by the millions.

Hang-the-kaiser movies, carrying such titles as *The Kaiser*, *the Beast of Berlin*, and *To Hell with the Kaiser*, revealed the helmeted "Hun" at his bloodiest. Arm-waving conductors by the thousands led huge audiences in songs that poured scorn on the enemy and glorified the "boys" in uniform.

The entire nation, catching the frenzied spirit of a religious revival, burst into song. This was undoubtedly America's singingest war. Most memorable was George M. Cohan's spine-tingling "Over There":

*Over there, over there
Send the word, send the word over there,
That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming
The drums rum-tumming ev'rywhere.*

Creel typified American war mobilization, which relied more on aroused passion and voluntary compliance than on formal laws. But he oversold the ideals of Wilson and led the world to expect too much. When the president proved to be a mortal and not a god, the resulting disillusionment both at home and abroad was disastrous.

Creel Manipulates Minds

Mobilizing people's minds for war, both in America and abroad, was an urgent task facing the Washington authorities. For this purpose the Committee on Public Information was created. It was headed by a youngish journalist, George Creel, who, though outspoken and factless, was gifted with zeal and imagination. His job was to sell America on the war and sell the world on Wilsonian war aims.

The Creel organization, employing some 150,000 workers at home and overseas, proved that words were indeed weapons. It sent out an army of 75,000 "four-minute men"—often longer-winded than that—who delivered countless speeches containing much "patriotic pep."

Creel's propaganda took varied forms. Posters were splashed on billboards in the "Battle of the Fences," as artists "rallied to the colors." Millions of leaflets and pamphlets, which contained the most pungent Wilsonisms, were showered like confetti upon the

Enforcing Loyalty and Stifling Dissent

German Americans numbered over 8 million, counting those with at least one parent foreign-born, out of a

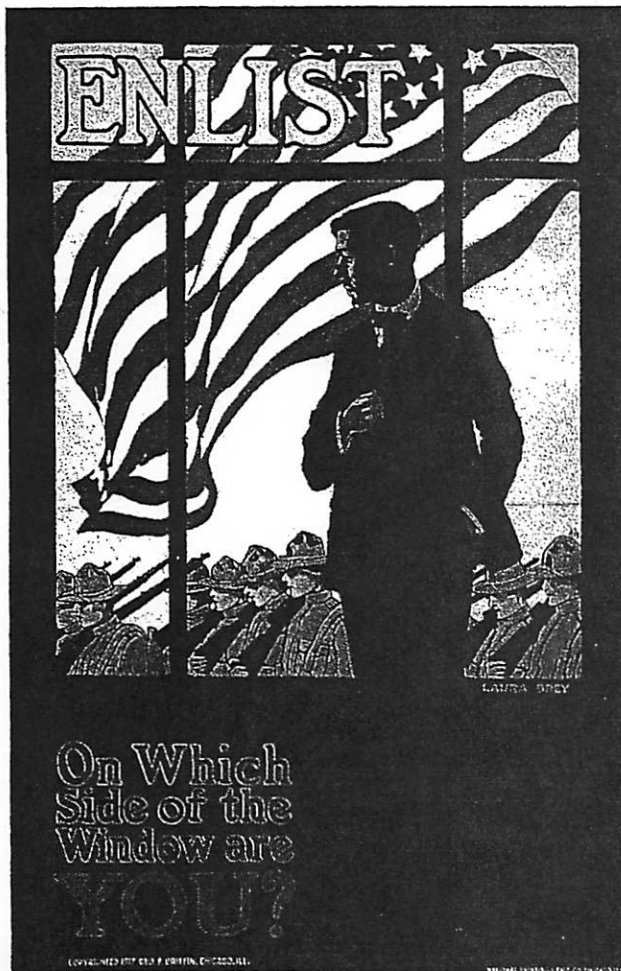


Socialist Leader Eugene V. Debs Addresses an Antiwar Rally in 1918 For his denunciation of World War I, Debs was convicted under the Espionage Act of 1917 and sent to federal prison. In his courtroom speech defending himself against charges of disloyalty, he passionately declared, "While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." He ran as a presidential candidate in 1920 while still incarcerated in his cell and received nearly a million votes.

total population of 100 million. On the whole they proved to be dependably loyal to the United States. Yet rumor-mongers were quick to spread tales of spying and sabotage; even trifling epidemics of diarrhea were blamed on German agents. A few German Americans were tarred, feathered, and beaten; in one extreme case a German Socialist in Illinois was lynched by a drunken mob.

As emotion mounted, hysterical hatred of Germans and things Germanic swept the nation. Orchestras found it unsafe to present German-composed music, like that of Wagner or Beethoven. German books were removed from library shelves, and German classes were

Patriotic Persuasion Worried about the public's enthusiasm for the war, the government employed all the arts of psychology and propaganda to sustain the martial spirit. The prewar song "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" was changed to "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Slacker," which in turn inspired the cruel parody "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Sausage."



canceled in high schools and colleges. Sauerkraut became "liberty cabbage," hamburger "liberty steak." Even beer became suspect, as patriotic Americans fretted over the loyalty of breweries with names like Schlitz and Pabst.

Both the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 reflected current fears about Germans and antiwar Americans. Especially visible among the nineteen hundred prosecutions pursued under these laws were antiwar Socialists and members of the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Kingpin Socialist Eugene V. Debs was convicted under the Espionage Act in 1918 and sentenced to ten years in a federal penitentiary. IWW leader William D. ("Big Bill") Haywood and ninety-nine associates were similarly convicted. Virtually any criticism of the government could be censored and punished. Some critics claimed the new laws were bending, if not breaking, the First Amendment. But in *Schenck v. United States* (1919), the Supreme Court affirmed their legality, arguing that freedom of speech could be revoked when such speech posed a "clear and present danger" to the nation.

These prosecutions form an ugly chapter in the history of American civil liberty. With the dawn of peace, presidential pardons were rather freely granted, including President Harding's to Eugene Debs in 1921. Yet a few victims lingered behind bars into the 1930s.



The Nation's Factories Go to War

Victory was no foregone conclusion, especially since the Republic, despite ample warning, was caught flat-footedly unready for its leap into global war. The pacifistic Wilson had only belatedly backed some mild preparedness measures beginning in 1915, including the creation of a civilian Council of National Defense to study problems of economic mobilization. He had also launched a shipbuilding program (as much to capture the belligerents' war-disrupted foreign trade as to anticipate America's possible entry into the war) and endorsed a modest beefing-up of the army, which with 100,000 regulars then ranked about fifteenth among the armies of the world, in the same category with Persia's. It would take a herculean effort to marshal America's daunting but disorganized resources and throw them into the field quickly enough to bolster the Allied war effort.

Towering obstacles confronted economic mobilizers. Sheer ignorance was among the biggest roadblocks. No one knew precisely how much steel or explosive powder the country was capable of producing. Old ideas also

proved to be liabilities, as traditional fears of big government hamstrung efforts to orchestrate the economy from Washington. States' rights Democrats and businesspeople alike balked at federal economic controls, even though the embattled nation could ill afford the freewheeling, hit-or-miss chaos of the peacetime economy.

Late in the war, and after some bruising political battles, Wilson succeeded in imposing some order on this economic confusion. In March 1918 he appointed lone-eagle stock speculator Bernard Baruch to head the War Industries Board. But the War Industries Board never had more than feeble formal powers, and it was disbanded within days after the armistice. Even in a globe-girdling crisis, the American preference for laissez-faire and for a weak central government proved amazingly strong.

nearly two weeks. Black and white gangs roamed Chicago's streets, eventually killing fifteen whites and twenty-three blacks.

Suffering Until Suffrage

Women also heeded the call of patriotism and opportunity. Thousands of female workers flooded into factories and fields, taking up jobs vacated by men who left the assembly line for the frontline. But the war split the women's movement deeply. Many progressive-era feminists were pacifists, inclined to oppose the participation both of America in the war and women in the war effort. This group found a voice in the National Woman's party, led by Quaker activist Alice Paul, which demonstrated against "Kaiser Wilson" with marches and hunger strikes.

But the larger part of the suffrage movement, represented by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, supported Wilson's war. Leaders echoed Wilson's justification for fighting by arguing that women must take part in the war effort to earn a role in shaping the peace. The fight for democracy abroad was women's best hope for winning true democracy at home.

War mobilization gave new momentum to the suffrage fight. Impressed by women's war work, President

In an open address to Congress in 1917, suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt (1859–1947) capitalized on the idealism of the day and invoked the founding principles of American democracy in arguing the case for women's right to vote:

"How can our nation escape the logic it has never failed to follow, when its last unenfranchised class calls for the vote? Behold our Uncle Sam floating the banner with one hand, 'Taxation without representation is tyranny,' and with the other seizing the billions of dollars paid in taxes by women to whom he refuses 'representation.' . . . Is there a single man who can justify such inequality of treatment, such outrageous discrimination? Not one."



In the Trenches U.S. Army nurses at the fighting front in France, 1918. The war also opened many opportunities for women's work on the home front, but the conflict ended too soon for many women to secure a permanent foothold in occupations traditionally dominated by men.

Wilson endorsed woman suffrage as "a vitally necessary war measure." In 1917 New York voted for suffrage at the state level; Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota followed. Eventually the groundswell could no longer be contained. In 1920, eighty years after the first calls for suffrage at Seneca Falls, the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified, giving all American women the right to vote. (See the Appendix.)

Despite political victory, women's wartime economic gains proved fleeting. Although a permanent Women's Bureau did emerge after the war in the Department of Labor to protect women in the workplace, most women workers soon gave up their war

jobs. Meanwhile, Congress affirmed its support for women in their traditional role as mothers when it passed the Sheppard-Towner Maternity Act of 1921, providing federally financed instruction in maternal and infant health care.

Feminists continued to flex their political muscle in the postwar decade, especially in campaigns for laws to protect women in the workplace and prohibit child labor. Complete success often eluded them in those crusades, but the developments of the World War I era nevertheless foreshadowed a future when women's wage-labor and political power would reshape the American way of life.



Suffragists Picket the White House, 1917
Militant feminists sometimes handcuffed themselves to the White House fence to dramatize their appeal to the president.

Forging a War Economy

Mobilization relied more on the heated emotions of patriotism than on the cool majesty of the laws. The largely voluntary and somewhat haphazard character of economic war organization testified unequivocally to ocean-insulated America's safe distance from the fighting—as well as to the still-modest scale of government powers in the progressive-era Republic.

As the larder of democracy, America had to feed itself and its allies. By a happy inspiration, the man chosen to head the Food Administration was the Quaker-humanitarian Herbert C. Hoover. He was already considered a hero because he had successfully led a massive charitable drive to feed the starving people of war-racked Belgium.

In common with other American war administrators, Hoover preferred to rely on voluntary compliance rather than on compulsory edicts. He deliberately rejected issuing ration cards, a practice used in Europe. Instead he waged a whirlwind propaganda campaign through posters, billboards, newspapers, pulpits, and movies. To save food for export, Hoover proclaimed wheatless Wednesdays and meatless Tuesdays—all on a voluntary basis. Even children, when eating apples, were urged to be “patriotic to the core.”

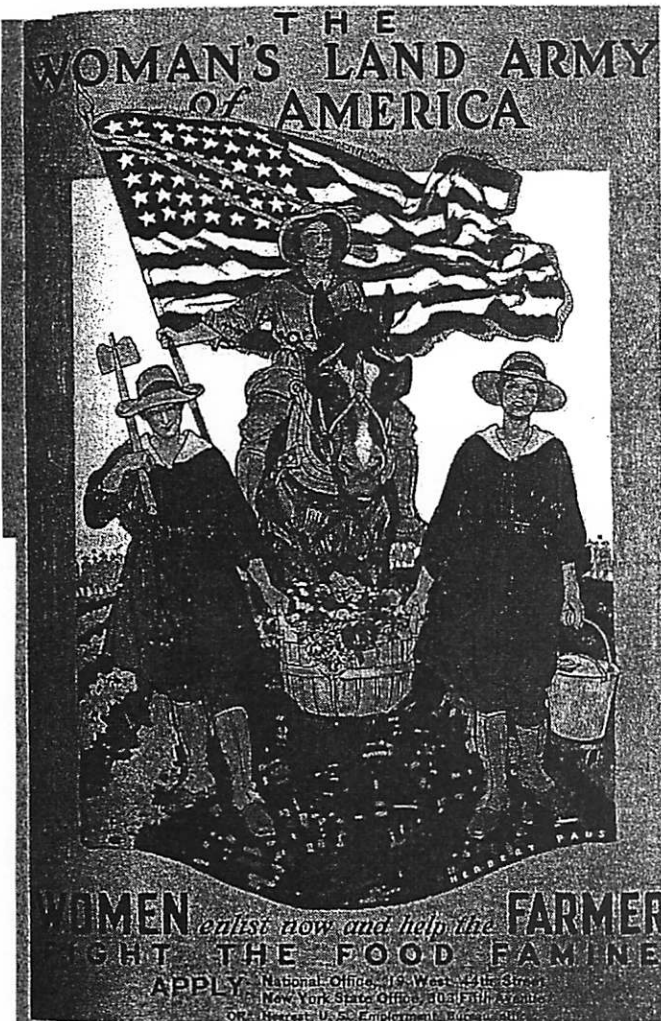
The country soon broke out in a rash of vegetable “victory gardens,” as perspiring patriots hoed their way to victory in backyards and vacant lots. Congress severely restricted the use of foodstuffs for manufacturing alcoholic beverages, and the war-spawned spirit of

self-denial helped accelerate the wave of prohibition that was sweeping the country. Many leading brewers were German-descended, and this taint made the drive against alcohol all the more popular. The reformers' dream of a saloonless nation was finally achieved—temporarily—in 1919 with the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, prohibiting all alcoholic drinks.

Thanks to the fervent patriotic wartime spirit Hoover's voluntary approach worked. Farm production increased by one-fourth, and food exports to the Allies tripled in volume. Hoover's methods were widely imitated in other war agencies. The Fuel Administration exhorted Americans to save fuel with “heatless Mondays,” “lightless nights,” and “gasless Sundays.” The Treasury Department sponsored huge parades and invoked slogans like “Halt the Hun” to promote four great Liberty Loan drives, followed by a Victory Loan campaign in 1919. Together these efforts netted the then-fantastic sum of about \$21 billion, or two-thirds of the current cost of the war to the United States. The remainder was raised by increased taxes, which, unlike the loan subscriptions, were obligatory. (The ultimate bill, including interest and veterans' benefits, mounted to some \$112 billion.)

Pressures of various kinds, patriotic and otherwise, were used to sell bonds. The unfortunate German American who could not display a Liberty Bond button might find his or her house bedaubed with yellow paint. A number of reluctant investors in war bonds were roughly handled. In at least one instance, a man signed for a bond with a rope around his neck.

Despite the Wilson administration's preference for voluntary means of mobilizing the economy, the gov-



Food for Thought Wartime agencies flooded the country with posters like this in 1917-1918, exhorting women on the home front to "grow their own" and thus ease the pressure on food supplies.

Government on occasion reluctantly exercised its sovereign formal power, notably when it took over the nation's railroads following indescribable traffic snarls in late 1917. Washington also hustled to get its hands on ships. It seized enemy merchant vessels trapped in America's harbors and orchestrated a gigantic drive to construct new tonnage. A few concrete vessels were launched, including one appropriately named *Faith*. A wooden-ship program was undertaken, though after months of war, birds were still nesting in the trees from which the vessels were to be hammered.

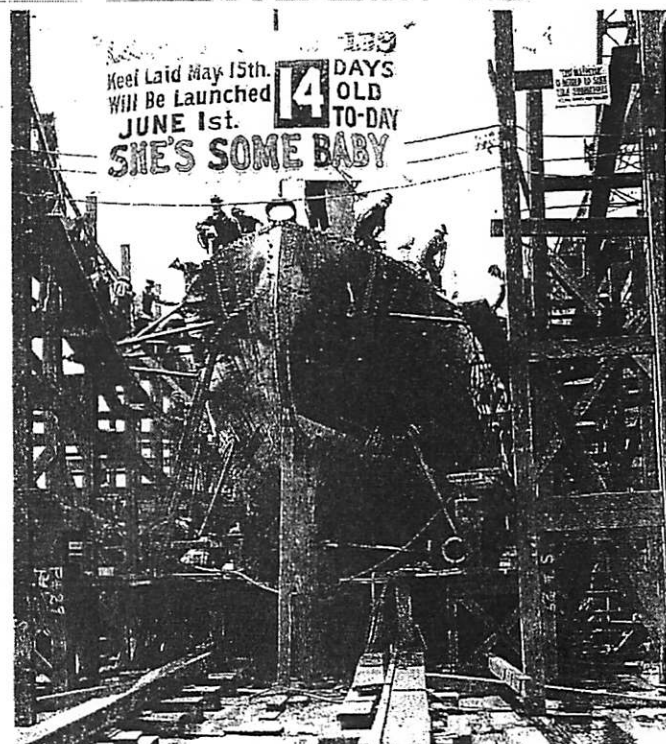
Making Plowboys into Doughboys

Most citizens, at the outset, did not dream of sending a mighty force to France. As far as fighting went, America would use its navy to uphold freedom of the seas. It would continue to ship war materials to the Allies and supply them with loans, which finally totaled nearly \$10 billion. But in April and May of 1917, the European associates laid their cards on the table. They confessed that they were scraping the bottom not only of their money chests but, more ominously, of their manpower barrels. A huge American army would have to be raised, trained, and transported, or the whole western front would collapse.

Conscription was the only answer to the need for raising an immense army with all possible speed. Wilson disliked a draft, as did many other Americans with Civil War memories, but he eventually accepted and eloquently supported conscription as a disagreeable and temporary necessity.

The proposed draft bill immediately ran into a barrage of criticism in Congress. A congressman from

Miracles in Shipbuilding



Ignoring grisly tales of the agonies of trench warfare, many young American men saw an opportunity for adventure and seized it. Author John Dos Passos (1896–1970) recollected how he felt going off to war in 1917:

"We had spent our boyhood in the afterglow of the peaceful nineteenth century. . . . What was war like? We wanted to see with our own eyes. We flocked into the volunteer services. I respected the conscientious objectors, and occasionally felt I should take that course myself, but hell, I wanted to see the show."

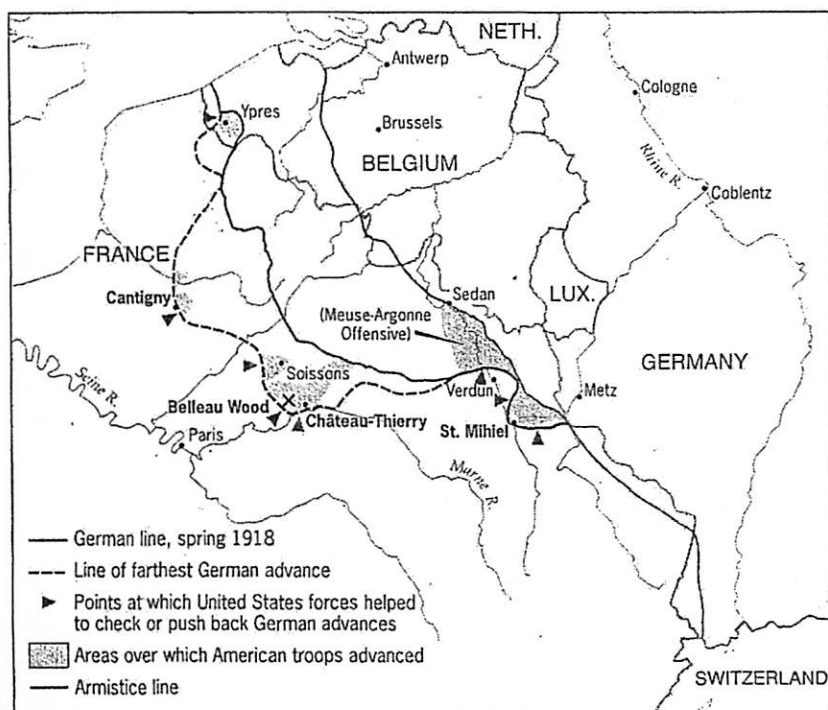
Missouri, deploring compulsion, cried out in protest that there was "precious little difference between a conscript and a convict." Prophets of doom predicted that on draft-registration day, the streets would run red with blood. At length Congress—six weeks after declaring war—grudgingly got around to passing conscription.

The draft act required the registration of all males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five. No "draft dodger" could purchase his exemption or hire a substitute, as in the days of the Civil War, though the law exempted men in key industries, such as shipbuilding.

The draft machinery, on the whole, worked effectively. Registration day proved to be a day of patriotic pilgrimages to flag-draped-registration centers, and the sign-up saw no shedding of blood, as some had gloomily predicted. Despite precautions, some 337,000 "slackers" escaped the draft, and about 4,000 conscientious objectors were excused.

Within a few frantic months, the army grew to over 4 million men. For the first time, women were admitted to the armed forces; some 11,000 to the navy and 269 to the marines. African Americans also served in the armed forces, though in strictly segregated units and usually under white officers. Reflecting racial attitudes of the time, military authorities hesitated to train black men for combat, and the majority of black soldiers were assigned to "construction battalions" or put to work unloading ships.

Recruits were supposed to receive six months of training in America and two more months overseas. But so great was the urgency that many doughboys were swept swiftly into battle scarcely knowing how to handle a rifle, much less a bayonet.



Major U.S. Operations in France, 1918

One doughboy recorded in his diary his baptism of fire at St. Mihiel: "Hiked through dark woods. No lights allowed, guided by holding on the pack of the man ahead. Stumbled through underbrush for about half mile into an open field where we waited in soaking rain until about 10:00 P.M. We then started on our hike to the St. Mihiel front, arriving on the crest of a hill at 1:00 A.M. I saw a sight which I shall never forget. It was the zero hour and in one instant the entire front as far as the eye could reach in either direction was a sheet of flame, while the heavy artillery made the earth quake."

Focus Question: What factors did Wilson have to take to wage an effective war?

Directions: Using pages _____ of the reader complete the below chart.

Factors to Wage an Effective War:	Goal	How was it done?	Effects
Mobilizing Army			
Mobilizing Economy			
Mobilizing People (Public Support)			

After completing the chart, create a list on the back of this sheet of at least three positive and three negative outcomes of mobilizing in these areas.

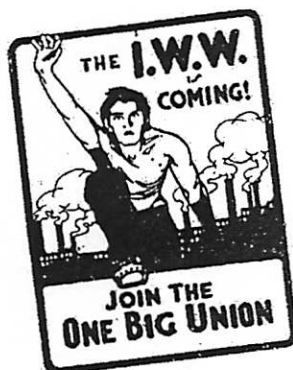
Berenson/Tallevi
US32

Read & annotate

ESPIONAGE AND SEDITION ACTS In June 1917 Congress passed the Espionage Act, and in May 1918 it passed the Sedition Act. Under the **Espionage and Sedition Acts** a person could be fined up to \$10,000 and sentenced to 20 years in jail for interfering with the war effort or for saying anything disloyal, profane, or abusive about the government or the war effort.

Like the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, these laws clearly violated the spirit of the First Amendment. Their passage led to over 2,000 prosecutions for loosely defined antiwar activities; of these, over half resulted in convictions. Newspapers and magazines that opposed the war or criticized any of the Allies lost their mailing privileges. The House of Representatives refused to seat Victor Berger, a socialist congressman from Wisconsin, because of his antiwar views. Columbia University fired a distinguished psychologist because he opposed the war. A colleague who supported the war thereupon resigned in protest, saying, "If we have to suppress everything we don't like to hear, this country is resting on a pretty wobbly basis."

The Espionage and Sedition Acts targeted socialists and labor leaders. Eugene V. Debs was handed a ten-year prison sentence for speaking out against the war and the draft. The anarchist Emma Goldman received a two-year prison sentence and a \$10,000 fine for organizing the No Conscription League. When she left jail, the authorities deported her to Russia. "Big Bill" Haywood and other leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) were accused of sabotaging the war effort because they urged workers to strike for better conditions and higher pay. Haywood was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Under such federal pressure, the IWW faded away. ●



▲ This Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) sticker encourages workers to join the union.

Vocabulary
sedition: rebellion against one's government; treason

MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Effects

● What impact did the Espionage and Sedition Acts have on free speech?

Schenck v. United States (1919)

Vocabulary

abridging Lessening, interfering with.

neutral Not allied with or supporting either side in a war or dispute.

draft To select people for required military service.

insubordination Unwillingness to accept orders from someone in authority.

affirm To agree or support, as when a higher court agrees with the earlier decision of a lower court.

Reviewing the Case

The First Amendment guarantee of free speech and expression reads: "Congress shall make no law . . . **abridging** the freedom of speech. . . ." But, at several different periods in the history of the United States, Congress has passed laws limiting how much citizens can criticize or resist government actions. Is this an abridgment of free speech? In the case of *Schenck v. United States*, the Supreme Court established a guideline that is still followed.

In 1917 the United States was still officially **neutral**, but its entry into World War I was imminent. To build up the army, Congress passed an act on May 18, 1917, that established a military **draft**. To encourage national unity in the war effort, Congress also passed several laws that limited criticism of the government and opposition to its policies. On June 15, 1917, Congress passed the Espionage Act. Sections of the Espionage Act prohibited any attempt to cause **insubordination** among military personnel or to interfere with the draft or with military recruitment.

Three days later Charles Schenck was arrested for violating the Espionage Act. He was accused of printing and mailing antiwar pamphlets to some 15,000 to 16,000 men who had been accepted for induction into the military under the Selective Service Act. Schenck was the general secretary of the American Socialist Party and, like most other members of the party, he strongly opposed the war. He

claimed it was being fought for the benefit of Wall Street investors who would profit from the sale of merchandise to the military.

The U.S. District Court for Pennsylvania ruled that the pamphlets were designed to cause men to resist the draft. Therefore, the court decided, Schenck had violated the Espionage Act. Schenck claimed there was not enough evidence to convict him of the charges that had been brought against him. He said that his actions were a form of free speech and claimed that the Espionage Act abridged the rights of free speech. Thus, according to him, the act was unconstitutional. Convicted in the district court, Schenck appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The issue before the Court: Does the Espionage Act violate the First Amendment in respect to Schenck's freedom of speech?

The Supreme Court ruled unanimously to **affirm** the decision of the district court against Schenck. Writing for the Court, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes laid down a standard that would become famous:

We admit that in many places and in ordinary times the defendants in saying all that was said in the circular would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends on the circumstances in which it is done. The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre, and causing a panic. . . . The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive [actual] evils that Congress has a right to prevent."

In the Schenck decision, the Supreme Court established clear limitations on freedom of speech. The guideline is the existence of a "clear and present danger," a situation in which free speech could bring harm to the general welfare. In such cases, Congress has the power to pass laws to protect its citizens

and the national security of the United States even if those laws abridge free speech. The "clear and present danger" test is a way to balance the rights of the individual with those of society.

According to Justice Holmes, it made no

difference that Schenck and the others had failed to interfere with military recruitment. "... We perceive no ground for saying that success alone warrants making the act a crime," he concluded.

Name:

Date:

US33

Tallevi/Berenson

Free Speech in Wartime Scenarios

Imagine you are a Senator during WWI. For which of these reasons, if any, would you support the government's suppression of dissent? Mark these situations with a Star (). Explain Why!?*

1. A newspaper may disclose information that is useful to the enemy, such as invasion plans or the vulnerabilities of the navy.
2. Moral condemnation of the war may lead people to refuse induction into the army or even to blow up military installments.
3. Antiwar dissent may strengthen the enemy's resolve and make it more difficult for the nation to achieve victory or negotiate a just peace.
4. Persistent criticism of the nation's leaders in wartime may demoralize citizens and weaken their will to fight.
5. Dissent may persuade people to vote for political candidates who will end the war, even though those in authority are certain this is contrary to the national interest.
6. Critics may disseminate *false* information, such as inflated casualty counts, in an effort to mislead the public and turn people against war.

People convicted under the Espionage Act...
Do you agree?

- Rose Pastor Stokes, a Russian immigrant who had worked as a cigar maker for twelve years before becoming editor of the socialist *Jewish Daily News*, was convicted under the act for saying, "I am for the people and the government is for the profiteers," during an antiwar statement to the Women's Dining Club of Kansas City. Her speech was later published in the *Kansas City Star*. Although there were no soldiers—indeed, no men—in her intended audience, the government argued that she had violated the act

because "our armies . . . can operate and succeed only so far as they are supported and maintained by the folks at home," and Stokes's statement had the tendency to "chill enthusiasm, extinguish confidence, and retard cooperation" of mothers, sisters, and sweethearts. She was sentenced to ten years in prison.¹⁴³

- J. P. Doe, the son of a chief justice of the Supreme Court of New Hampshire, was convicted for mailing a "chain" letter to "friends of immediate peace," stating that Germany had not broken a promise to end submarine warfare. Although this was clearly a matter of historical interpretation, the government argued that this statement "would have a direct tendency to obstruct the recruiting and enlistment service."¹⁴⁴
- Thirty German Americans in South Dakota were convicted for sending a petition to the governor demanding reforms in the Selective Service procedure. The signers of the petition "threatened" to vote the governor out of office if he did not meet their demands. The government charged that the defendants had willfully obstructed the recruiting and enlistment service.¹⁴⁵
- The Reverend Clarence H. Waldron was convicted for distributing a pamphlet stating that "if Christians [are] forbidden to fight to preserve the Person of their Lord and Master, they may not fight to preserve themselves, or any city they should happen to dwell in." The government charged that in distributing this pamphlet Waldron had attempted to cause insubordination and to obstruct the recruiting service. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison.
- Robert Goldstein was convicted under the act for producing and exhibiting a motion picture about the American Revolution. *The Spirit of '76* depicted Paul Revere's ride, the signing of the Declaration of Independence,

CHAPTER
19

GUIDED READING

Wilson Fights for Peace

Section 4

As you read about President Wilson's plan for world peace, make notes to answer questions related to the time line below.

1918	Wilson delivers Fourteen Points speech to Congress.	→	What were Wilson's points? 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.-13. 14.
1919	Treaty of Versailles is signed.	→	15. What terms of the treaty specifically affected Germany? 16. What were the weaknesses of the treaty?
1920	Senate rejects Treaty of Versailles.	→	17. Why did Henry Cabot Lodge object to the treaty?
1921	Senate again rejects Treaty of Versailles.	→	18. How did Wilson help bring about the Senate's rejection of the treaty?
	U.S. signs separate treaty with Germany.	→	19. What circumstances at this time would eventually lead many Germans to support Adolf Hitler?

the conservative and thinking people of the community, even those living in back of the Yards. They know better. I believe it goes without saying that there isn't a colored man, regardless of how little brains he'd have, who would attempt to go over into the Polish district and set fire to anybody's house over there. He wouldn't get that far.

The controlling superintendent of Swift & Company said he could not say it from his own experience, but he understood there was as much friction between the Poles and Lithuanians who worked together in the Yards as between the Negroes and the whites. The homes burned belonged to

Lithuanians. The grand jury stated in its report: "The jury believes that these fires were started for the purpose of inciting race feeling by blaming same on the blacks."

The methods of attack used by Negroes and whites during the riot differed; the Negroes usually clung to individual attack and the whites to mob action. Negroes used chiefly firearms and knives, and the whites used their fists, bricks, stones, baseball bats, pieces of iron, hammers. Among the white men, 69 per cent were shot or stabbed and 31 per cent were beaten; among the Negroes almost the reverse was true, 35 per cent being shot and stabbed and 65 per cent beaten. A colonel in charge of a regiment of militia on riot duty says they found few whites but many Negroes armed.

Questions

1. In general, how were people attacked during the riot?
2. What role did the automobile play in the rioting?
3. Consider the impact of the riot on the participants, the city government, and the middle class. How might the incident have affected the city a decade or more later?

22-16 Returning Soldiers (1919)

W. E. B. Du Bois

Less than twelve months after Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois published two editorials endorsing African American support for the war, he expressed the postwar disillusionment of African Americans who had hoped that the war would make America, as well as the world, "safe for democracy."

Source: "Returning Soldiers," *The Crisis*, 18 (May 1919): 13–14.

We are returning from war! THE CRISIS and tens of thousands of black men were drafted into a great struggle. For bleeding France and what she means and has meant and will mean to us and humanity and against the threat of German race arrogance, we fought gladly and to the last drop of blood; for America and her highest ideals, we fought in far-off hope; for the dominant southern oligarchy entrenched in Washington, we fought in bitter resignation. For the America that represents and gloats in lynching, disfranchisement, caste, brutality and devilish insult—for this, in the hateful upturning and mixing of things, we were forced by vindictive fate to fight, also.

But today we return! We return from the slavery of uniform which the world's madness demanded us to don to the freedom of civil garb. We stand again to look America squarely in the face and call a spade a spade. We sing: This country of ours, despite all its better souls have done and dreamed, is yet a shameful land.

It lynches.

And lynching is barbarism of a degree of contemptible nastiness unparalleled in human history. Yet for fifty years

we have lynched two Negroes a week, and we have kept this up right through the war.

It *disfranchises* its own citizens.

Disfranchisement is the deliberate theft and robbery of the only protection of poor against rich and black against white. The land that disfranchises its citizens and calls itself a democracy lies and knows it lies.

It encourages *ignorance*.

It has never really tried to educate the Negro. A dominant minority does not want Negroes educated. It wants servants, dogs, whores and monkeys. And when this land allows a reactionary group by its stolen political power to force as many black folk into these categories as it possibly can, it cries in contemptible hypocrisy: "They threaten us with degeneracy; they cannot be educated."

It *steals* from us.

It organizes industry to cheat us. It cheats us out of our land: it cheats us out of our labor. It confiscates our savings. It reduces our wages. It raises our rent. It steals our profit. It taxes us without representation. It keeps us consistently and

universally poor, and then feeds us on charity and derides our poverty.

It *insults* us.

It has organized a nation-wide and latterly a world-wide propaganda of deliberate and continuous insult and defamation of black blood wherever found. It decrees that it shall not be possible in travel nor residence, work nor play, education nor instruction for a black man to exist without tacit or open acknowledgment of his inferiority to the dirtiest white dog. And it looks upon any attempt to question or even discuss this dogma as arrogance, unwarranted assumption and treason.

This is the country to which we Soldiers of Democracy return. This is the fatherland for which we fought! But it is

our fatherland. It was right for us to fight. The faults of *our* country are *our* faults. Under similar circumstances, we would fight again. But by the God of Heaven, we are cowards and jackasses if now that that war is over, we do not marshal every ounce of our brain and brawn to fight a sterner, longer, more unbending battle against the forces of hell in our own land.

We return.

We return from fighting.

We return fighting.

Make way for Democracy! We saved it in France, and by the Great Jehovah, we will save it in the United States of America, or know the reason why.

Questions

1. Compare and contrast the content and tone of "Help Us to Help" (Document 22-10) and this selection.
2. Drawing on the text (Chapters 18, 20, and 22, as appropriate), flesh out the charges in W. E. B. Du Bois's indictment.

Questions for Further Thought

1. What do the text and documents on the wartime and postwar periods suggest about the relationship between foreign and domestic developments between 1917 and 1920?
2. Compare and contrast the gains—or lack thereof—of women and African Americans during and after World War I. How do you account for similarities and dissimilarities between the two groups?

With your group, respond to the following:

1. What are Wilson's reasons for joining the League of Nations?
2. What are Lodge's reasons for opposing the League of Nations?
3. Which man makes the stronger case? (Cite specifics to support your claim.)
4. Imagine yourselves as citizens in 1919: a returning soldier, a mother who lost her son, a senator (Republican or Democrat), a farmer, a recent immigrant living in a large city, etc. Which position regarding the treaty and the League of Nations do you favor? Why?

Be prepared to share your opinions with other groups in class.

[print page](#)[close window](#)

Henry Cabot Lodge: Opposition to the Treaty of Versailles speech (1919)

In this 1919 speech, Henry Cabot Lodge argues against American membership in the League of Nations, as provided for the Treaty of Versailles. Lodge opposes U.S. collaboration with foreign nations and proposes that international law will allow the United States to maintain control of American lives. His opinion is clear when he states: "I have loved but one flag and I cannot share that devotion and give affection to the mongrel banner invented for a league."

As it stands there is no doubt whatever in my mind that American troops and American ships may be ordered to any part of the world by nations other than the United States, and that is a proposition to which I for one can never assent. It must be made perfectly clear that no American soldiers, not even a corporal's guard, that no American sailors, not even the crew of a submarine, can ever be engaged in war or ordered anywhere except by the constitutional authorities of the United States. To Congress is granted by the Constitution the right to declare war, and nothing that would take the troops out of the country at the bidding or demand of other nations should ever be permitted except through congressional action. The lives of Americans must never be sacrificed except by the will of the American people expressed through their chosen Representatives in Congress. This is a point upon which no doubt can be permitted. American soldiers and American sailors have never failed the country when the country called upon them. They went in their hundreds of thousands into the war just closed. They went to die for the great cause of freedom and of civilization. They went at their service. We were late in entering the war. We made no preparation, as we ought to have done, for the ordeal which was clearly coming upon us; but we went and we turned the wavering scale. It was done by the American soldier, the American sailor, and the spirit and energy of the American people. They overrode all obstacles and all shortcomings on the part of the administration or of Congress and gave to their country a great place in the great victory. It was the first time we had been called upon to rescue the civilized world. Did we fail? On the contrary, we succeeded, succeeded largely and nobly, and we did it without any command from any league of nations. When the emergency came we met it, and we were able to meet it because we had built up on this continent the greatest and most powerful nation in the world, built it up under our own policies, in our own way, and one great element of our strength was the fact that we had held aloof and had not thrust ourselves into European quarrels; that we had no selfish interest to serve. We made great sacrifices. We have done splendid work. I believe that we do not require to be told by foreign nations when we shall do work which freedom and civilization require. I think we can move to victory much better under our own command than under the command of others. Let us unite with the world to promote the peaceable settlement of all international disputes. Let us try to develop international law. Let us associate ourselves with the other nations for these purposes. But let us retain in our own hands and in our own control the lives of the youth of the land. Let no American be sent into battle except by the constituted authorities of his own country and by the will of the people of the United States.

I have loved but one flag and I cannot share that devotion and give affection to the mongrel banner invented for a league. Internationalism, illustrated by the Bolshevik and by the men to whom all countries are alike, provided they can make money out of them, is to me repulsive. National I must remain, and in that way I, like all other Americans, can render the amplest service to the world. The United States is the world's best hope, but if you fetter her in the interests and quarrels of other nations, if you tangle her in the intrigues of Europe, you will destroy her power for good and endanger her very existence. Leave her to march freely through the centuries to come as in the years that have gone. Strong, generous, and confident, she has nobly served mankind. Beware how you trifle with your marvelous inheritance, this great land of ordered liberty, for if we stumble and fall, freedom and civilizations everywhere will go down in ruin.

ID: 254623

[back to top](#)

"Henry Cabot Lodge: Opposition to the Treaty of Versailles speech (1919)." *American History*. 2009. ABC-CLIO. 17 Mar. 2009 <<http://www.americanhistory.abc-clio.com>>.

[print page](#)[close window](#)

Woodrow Wilson: League of Nations speech (1919)

On July 10, 1919, President Woodrow Wilson presented to the U.S. Senate the results of several months of negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference to draft a treaty that would end World War I. Among the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles was the outline for an international peacekeeping organization known as the League of Nations that had been Wilson's creation and chief contribution to the peace talks. Below is an excerpt of his speech to the Senate that discusses the league. Despite Wilson's unqualified support for U.S. ratification of the treaty and participation in the league, the U.S. Senate refused to do either, voting down ratification and declining to join the league in an effort to reestablish U.S. isolationism.

It gives me pleasure to add to this formal reading of the result of our labors that the character of the discussion which occurred at the sittings of the commission was not only of the most constructive but of the most encouraging sort. It was obvious throughout our discussions that, although there were subjects upon which there were individual differences of judgment with regard to the method by which our objects should be obtained, there was practically at no point any serious differences of opinion or motive as to the objects which we were seeking.

Indeed, while these debates were not made the opportunity for the expression of enthusiasm and sentiments, I think the other members of the commission will agree with me that there was an undertone of high respect and of enthusiasm for the thing we were trying to do which was heartening throughout everything.

Because we felt that in a way this conference did entrust into us the expression of one of its highest and most important purposes, to see to it that the concord of the world in the future with regard to the objects of justice should not be subject to doubt or uncertainty; that the cooperation of the great body of nations should be assured in the maintenance of peace upon terms of honor and of international obligations.

The compulsion of that task was constantly upon us, and at no point was there shown the slightest desire to do anything but suggest the best means to accomplish that great object. There is very great significance, therefore, in the fact that the result was reached unanimously.

Fourteen nations were represented, among them all of those powers which for convenience we have called the Great Powers, and among the rest a representation of the greatest variety of circumstances and interests. So that I think we are justified in saying that the significance of the result, therefore, has the deepest of all meanings, the union of wills in a common purpose, a union of wills which cannot be resisted and which, I dare say, no nation will run the risk of attempting to resist.

Now, as to the character of the document. While it has consumed some time to read this document, I think you will see at once that it is very simple, and in nothing so simple as in the structure which it suggests for a league of nations, a body of delegates, an executive council, and a permanent secretariat.

When it came to the question of determining the character of the representation in the Body of Delegates, we were all aware of a feeling which is current throughout the world.

Inasmuch as I am stating it in the presence of the official representatives of the various governments here present, including myself, I may say that there is a universal feeling that the world cannot rest satisfied with merely official

guidance. There has reached us through many channels the feeling that if the deliberating body of the League of Nations was merely to be a body of officials representing the various governments, the peoples of the world would not be sure that some of the mistakes which preoccupied officials had admittedly made might not be repeated.

It was impossible to conceive a method or an assembly so large and various as to be really representative of the great body of the peoples of the world, because, as I roughly reckon it, we represent as we sit around this table more than 1.2 billion people.

You cannot have a representative assembly of 1.2 billion people, but if you leave it to each government to have, if it pleases, one or two or three representatives, though only with a single vote, it may vary its representation from time to time, not only, but it may (originate) the choice of its several representatives [wireless here unintelligible].

Therefore we thought that this was a proper and a very prudent concession to the practically universal opinion of plain men everywhere that they wanted the door left open to a variety of representation, instead of being confined to a single official body with which they could or might not find themselves in sympathy.

And you will notice that this body has unlimited rights of discussion. I mean of discussion of anything that falls within the field of international relations—and that it is especially agreed that war or international misunderstandings or anything that may lead to friction or trouble is everybody's business, because it may affect the peace of the world.

And in order to safeguard the popular power so far as we could of this representative body, it is provided, you will notice, that when a subject is submitted it is not to arbitration but to discussion by the Executive Council; it can, upon the initiative of either of the parties to the dispute, be drawn out of the Executive Council on the larger form of the general Body of Delegates, because through this instrument we are depending primarily and chiefly upon one great force, and this is the moral force of the public opinion of the world—the pleasing and clarifying and compelling influences of publicity—so that intrigues can no longer have their coverts; so that designs that are sinister can at anytime be drawn into the open; so that those things that are destroyed by the light may be promptly destroyed by the overwhelming light of the universal expression of the condemnation of the world.

Armed force is in the background in this program; but it is in the background, and, if the moral force of the world will not suffice, the physical force of the world shall. But that is the last resort, because this is intended as a constitution of peace, not as a league of war.

The simplicity of the document seems to me to be one of its chief virtues, because, speaking for myself, I was unable to see the variety of circumstances with which this League would have to deal. I was unable, therefore, to plan all the machinery that might be necessary to meet the differing and unexpected contingencies. Therefore, I should say of this document that it is not a straitjacket but a vehicle of life.

A living thing is born, and we must see to it what clothes we put on it. It is not a vehicle of power, but a vehicle in which power may be varied at the discretion of those who exercise it and in accordance with the changing circumstances of the time. And yet, while it is elastic, while it is general in its terms, it is definite in the one thing that we were called upon to make definite.

It is a definite guaranty of peace. It is a definite guaranty by word against aggression. It is a definite guaranty against the things which have just come near bringing the whole structure of civilization into ruin.

Its purposes do not for a moment lie vague. Its purposes are declared, and its powers are unmistakable. It is not in contemplation that this should be merely a league to secure the peace of the world. It is a league which can be used for cooperation in any international matter.

That is the significance of the provision introduced concerning labor. There are many ameliorations of labor conditions which can be effected by conference and discussion. I anticipate that there will be a very great usefulness in the Bureau of Labor which it is contemplated shall be set up by the League.

Men and women and children who work have been in the background through long ages and sometimes seemed to be forgotten, while governments have had their watchful and suspicious eyes upon the maneuvers of one another, while the thought of statesmen has been about structural action and the larger transactions of commerce and of finance.

Now, if I may believe the picture which I see, there comes into the foreground the great body of the laboring people of the world, the men and women and children upon whom the great burden of sustaining the world must from day to day fall, whether we wish it to do so or not; people who go to bed tired and wake up without the stimulation of lively hope. These people will be drawn into the field of international consultation and help, and will be among the wards of the combined governments of the world. This is, I take leave to say, a very great step in advance in the mere conception of that.

Then, as you will notice, there is an imperative article concerning the publicity of all international agreements. Henceforth no member of the League can call any agreement valid which it has not registered with the secretary general, in whose office, of course, it will be subject to the examination of any body representing a member of the League. And the duty is laid upon the secretary general to earliest possible time.

I suppose most persons who have not been conversant with the business of foreign affairs do not realize how many hundreds of these agreements are made in a single year, and how difficult it might be to publish the more unimportant of them immediately. How uninteresting it would be to most of the world to publish them immediately, but even they must be published just as soon as it is possible for the secretary general to publish them.

There has been no greater advance than this, gentlemen. If you look back upon the history of the world you will see how helpless peoples have too often been a prey to powers that had no conscience in the matter. It has been one of the many distressing revelations of recent years that the great power which has just been, happily, defeated put intolerable burdens and injustices upon the helpless people of some of the colonies which it annexed to itself; that its interest was rather their extermination than their development; that the desire was to possess their land for European purposes, and not to enjoy their confidence in order that mankind might be lifted in these places to the next higher level.

Now, the world, expressing its conscience in law, says there is an end of that, that our consciences shall be settled to this thing. States will be picked out which have already shown that they can exercise a conscience in this matter, and under their tutelage the helpless peoples of the world will come into a new light and into a new hope.

ID: 255285

[back to top](#)

CITATION: MLA STYLE

"Woodrow Wilson: League of Nations speech (1919)." *American History*. 2009. ABC-CLIO. 17 Mar. 2009
⟨<http://www.americanhistory.abc-clio.com>⟩.

Name: _____.

President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, January 8th, 1918

It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace, when they are begun, shall be absolutely open and that they shall involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind. The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret covenants entered into in the interest of particular governments and likely at some unlooked-for moment to upset the peace of the world. It is this happy fact, now clear to the view of every public man whose thoughts do not still linger in an age that is dead and gone, which makes it possible for every nation whose purposes are consistent with justice and the peace of the world to avow now or at any other time the objects it has in view.

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secure once for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. The programme of the world's peace, therefore, is our programme; and that programme, the only possible programme, as we see it, is this:

- 57
- I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
 - II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.
 - III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
 - IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.
 - V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
 - VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire.

The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

VII. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.

VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.

XI. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

XII. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the governments and peoples associated together against the Imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.

For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this programme does remove. We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this programme that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of pacific enterprise such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world, -- the new world in which we now live, -- instead of a place of mastery.